Meetings of tribal advisory bodies or committees

*195. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is regularly convening the meetings of Tribal Advisory Bodies or Committees;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the time frame for convening such meetings; and

(d) what are the guidelines issued in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON): (a) to (d) No, Sir. There are no such Tribal Advisory Bodies or Committees constituted in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Allocation of power from Mega power projects

*196. SHRI P.R. RAJAN:
SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had placed the condition of privatization of distribution, for allocation of power from Mega Power Projects;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Kerala Government had represented, during 2007-08, for removal of the above condition under peculiar circumstances of the State;

(d) if so, the action taken thereon;

(e) whether a decision would be taken in affirmative to the above representation; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The condition of privatization of distribution in cities with a population of more than one million, for allocation of power from Mega Power Projects was stipulated to encourage investment in the power sector by reducing the risk perception of the developers about financially weak State Electricity Boards.

(c) Yes, Sir. Kerala Government had requested for amending the Mega Power Policy deleting the condition of privatization of distribution in cities.

(d) to (f) A proposal to review the Mega Power Policy is under consideration.

Setting up of central universities

*197. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:
DR T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to set up 12 more Central Universities, adding to its present strength;

(b) whether the budget allocation for opening of these universities was Rs.3,280 crore;

(c) if so, what are total universities at present in the country;

(d) to what extent creation of 12 more universities would help in improving the education in the country;

(e) whether there are still many States where these universities are not set up; and

(f) if so, by when these universities would start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) With a view to increasing access and improving quality of higher education in the country, it is proposed to provide sixteen Central Universities - one in each State which does not have a Central University. This includes conversion of four existing State Universities into Central Universities and establishment of a new Central University in each of the remaining twelve uncovered States. The Central Universities Bill, 2008 has already been introduced in Lok Sabha for establishment and incorporation of these Universities. The financial requirement to meet the recurring and non-recurring expenditure of these Universities during the remaining part of the 11th Plan period is estimated at Rs.3,480 crore.

(c) to (f) There are 24 Central Universities at present, and together with the proposed Central Universities every State will have at least one Central University. Even though Central Universities constitute only a small segment of the higher education system in India, these institutions make a significant contribution in setting standards of quality education and research, besides helping in removing regional imbalances in access to higher education. The establishment and functioning of the new Central Universities is dependent on the passing of the "The Central Universities Bill, 2008" and hence no definite timeframe can be indicated at this stage.

Provincialisation of schools in Assam

*198. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Lower Primary, Middle English, high School and Higher Secondary schools have been set up in Assam with due permission of the Union Government, during the last many years and if so, the details thereof year-wise and district-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government has failed to provincialise the services of the teachers and the school buildings are also in a very deplorable conditions; and

(c) whether the Ministry would adopt any policy for solution of such problems and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) No primary, upper primary or secondary school has been set up in Assam under any related centrally sponsored scheme of Government of India since 2001 except 24 residential Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas for girls at upper primary level, in educationally backward blocks.